THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • WEDNESDAY • APRIL 27, 2022 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 20 • LATE CITY EDITION

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CENTRE SCRAPS MP QUOTA IN KENDRIYA VIDYALAYAS

The quotas for the children of education ministry staff, MPs and retired KV employees have also been scrapped

OTHER DISCRETIONARY QUOTAS ALSO NIXED

The Centre also decided to consider Covid orphans for admission under PM CARES for Children Scheme. Till now, each MP had a quota of 10 seats and district magistrate 17, which most of them sought to monetise. KVS has also nixed other quotas including that of wards of education ministry staff and retired KV employees, and dependent grandchildren of MPs

SOME SPECIAL PROVISIONS TO CONTINUE

- Special provisions will continue for children of recipients of Param Vir Chakra, Maha Vir Chakra, Vir Chakra, Ashok Chakra, Kirti Chakra and Shaurya Chakra; recipients of the national bravery award; children of central government employees who died in harness, and those who have special talent in fine arts

1,248

NUMBER OF KENDRIYA VIDYALAYAS IN INDIA WITH OVER 14 LAKH STUDENTS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

PK rejects Cong's induction offer

Decision after no free hand for poll strategist

RICHA SHARMA @ New Delhi

IN the end, it was a case of so near and yet so far. Talks between the Congress and poll strategist Prashant Kishor over his induction broke down as they were not on the same page on giving him a say in top appointments and letting him have a free hand to overhaul the party.

The talks reached a dead end after the party announced the formation of an Empowered Group 2024 on Monday. Kishor was offered a seat on group, but not a position to shake up the system.

"The Rahul Gandhi camp also didn't want Kishor being given a big authority in the party," said a senior party leader.

Sources said the arrangement Kishor's Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) got into recently with the TRS was no reason for the botched deal, but many party leaders said it was a sticking point.

An eight-member committee that assessed his party revival plan was split on his role and responsibilities within the grand old party.

A senior party leader said during his meetings with the top party leadership, Kishor pressed them on giving him role in making key appointments, including that of Congress president and Congress Parliamentary Party leader.

Both sides announced the deal break through tweets.

"Following a presentation and discussions with Sh. Prashant Kishor, Congress President has constituted an Empowered Action Group 2024 and invited him to join the party as part of the group with defined responsibility. He declined. We appreciate his efforts and suggestions given to the party," tweeted R S Surjewala, party media in-charge.

Soon, Kishor retorted: "I declined the generous offer of Congress to join the party as part of the EAG and take responsibility for the elections. In my humble opinion, more than me the party needs leadership and collective will to fix the deep-rooted structural problems through transformational reforms."

4th wave may peak by June: Minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Covid fourth wave may peak in the state by June-end and last till October, said Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar here on Tuesday.

Warning that the numbers are already rising, he said the people have to learn to live with the virus, but should ensure full vaccination and wear masks. "IIT Kanpur had predicted the fourth wave in June-end, but it seems to have arrived a month earlier. It is likely to peak after June and may go on till September or October," he added.

Asked whether the state is already in the midst of a fourth wave, he said that the numbers are too low to qualify it as such.

Though reports from INSACOG labs are still awaited, the prevalent variants of the virus are said to be Omicron's sublineages, he added.

Primary and Secondary Education Minister B C Nagesh said, "We will ensure that fourth wave does not affect the students' curriculum. Our classes are starting from May 16. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and the task force will come up with guidelines."

In the academic calendar released recently, a provision has been made to compensate for the loss of learning.

IIT Kanpur had predicted the fourth wave in June-end, but it seems to have arrived a month earlier. It is likely to peak after June and may go on till September or October
K Sudhakar, Health Minister

MAHARASHTRA	APR 25	APR 26
Fresh cases	2561	2,483
Recoveries	1,862	1970
Deaths	10	1,399
KARNATAKA	APR 25	APR 26
Fresh cases	64	85
Recoveries	69	70
Deaths	0	0

DCGI nod to 3 Covid vaccines for children

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

AMID a spike in Covid cases in parts of the country, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) on Tuesday approved three vaccines for use in children. The drug regulator gave the restricted emergency use authorisation for Biological E's Covid-19 vaccine Corbevax for children aged between five and 12 and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin for those aged 6-12 years.

DCGI also granted permission to Cadila for its ZyCoV-D as an additional dose of 3mg with a two-jab inoculation schedule 28 days apart for those above 12 years. This vaccine will now be given on Day 0 and Day 28. Earlier, ZyCoV-D was approved in a three-dose regimen on Day 0, Day 28 and Day 56.

The new approvals were tweeted by Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya. The announcement came as Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to hold a virtual meeting with Chief Ministers on Wednesday to discuss the recent Covid spike. In the past fortnight, many school children have tested positive.

At the moment, Bharat Biotech's inactivated whole virion vaccine is being administered in children aged 15-18 years and Biological E's protein subunit vaccine in children aged 12-15 years under the national Covid-19 immunisation programme.

K'TAKA PLANS SPORTS VARSITY IN BENGALURU

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka government is setting up a sports university funded by the Centre, making it the second such varsity planned after the National Sports University in Imphal, Manipur. Plans entail offering graduation and post-graduation courses in various sports and sports-related courses, including medicine, nutrition and counselling.

The Department of Sports has identified 100 acres in Yelahanka on the outskirts of the city to set up the university. Of this, 65 acres belong to the state government, while the remaining 35 acres are private lands to be acquired. The Revenue Department is expected to hand over the land to the Sports Department at the earliest. The venue is close to Kempegowda International Airport, which is seen as an advantage.

Karnataka Sports Minister Narayana Gowda told *The New Indian Express* that the university will be set up on international standards, and athletes from across India can come here to study and get trained too. CONTINUED ON: P5

EXPRESS READ

Will list hijab pleas soon, indicates SC

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday indicated that it would soon list the pleas against the Karnataka High Court's hijab order that upheld the ban on wearing hijab in educational institutions of the state. CJI NV Ramana, heading the bench said, "I will list it. Wait for two days".

KMF seeks to increase milk price by ₹3/L

Bengaluru: Karnataka Milk Federation Chairman Balakrishna Jarkiholi has written a letter to CM Basavaraj Bommai appealing to him to increase the price of milk by Rs 3/litre. The cost of processing milk has jumped by 30 per cent. To help farmers, there is a need to hike price of milk, Jarkiholi said. P5

4 IAS officers to face ACB probe

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chennai

A special court has ordered an ACB inquiry against four IAS officers, including ex-chief secretary TM Vijaya Bhaskar, for allegedly causing a loss of Rs 269 crore to the state. Narayanaswamy from Kolar filed a complaint before the Special Court to try cases against ACS Amitha Prasadh, ACS (Commerce and Industries) Dr EV Ramana Reddy, Chairman of Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission TM Vijaya Bhaskar, then director of the Karnataka Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency, Additional Secretary to the RDPR dept Dr Boregowda, then deputy secretary of Rural Water Supply Ramakrishna, and then bank Manager Ceelam Giri. P2

Weakening Lokayukta: Surrender SP, DySP posts, says K'taka govt

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

IN yet another blow to the anti-corruption watchdog Karnataka Lokayukta, the state government has unilaterally asked the Director General and Inspector of Police (DG&IGP) to take back all the 22 superintendents of police and 42 deputy superintendents of police working with the Lokayukta immediately. Lokayukta's powers were first curtailed by the Congress government six years ago by forming the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB).

The move comes as a big blow to the institution, as the order has come at a time when the post of Lokayukta is vacant and whose comments are sought in such decisions.

Rejecting the state police chief's proposal seeking sanction for creating posts of additional SP along with the staff in eight districts, Home Department has conveyed to him opinion of Finance Department that the proposal cannot be accepted. In the same communication, dated April 11, 2022, the department has also said that top police posts in the Lokayukta should be surrendered. If all the sanctioned 22 SP posts (20 working strength) and 42 DySP (40 working strength) posts are withdrawn, Inspectors and lower rung officers cannot probe top officials, sources said. P5

'Govt must consult Lokayukta'
Former Lokayukta Justice P Vishwanatha Shetty said, "Government has to consult the Lokayukta before taking such decisions, which is not possible as the post is vacant. Requirement of officers to probe pending cases has to be assessed.

Girl chases FIFA U-17 WC dream despite poverty

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

AT home, she often has little by way of nutrition. Surviving mostly on just *pani-bhaat* (rice fermented in water) on as her mother is a daily wage labourer and father a drunkard, Anita Kumari has managed to make it to the list of 33 for the national coaching camp at Jamshedpur for the forthcoming FIFA Under-17 World Cup team.

Fourth among five sisters, Anita's parents are so poor that they can't even afford green vegetables or pulses. They live in Chari-Hochar village under Kanke Block in Ranchi.

Anita Kumari

"Even though, our financial condition is very bad, somehow I managed to get all my five daughters educated and got three of them married. My fourth daughter is Anita," said Asha Devi. She is keeping her finger crossed hoping Anita's success would pull the family out of poverty.